

MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAMS

There are a variety of programs and services available to Alexandria minority business owners and entrepreneurs. These programs are sponsored by the federal government, the Commonwealth of Virginia, or other non-profit organizations.

Virginia Department of Minority Business Enterprise (DMBE)

The Virginia DMBE works with minority firms to increase contracting opportunities for minority businesses in both the public and private sector, with emphasis on doing business with the state government. Assistance is provided in registering minority firms as vendors with Virginia, federal and local agencies.

Contact: For more information, please contact Virginia DMBE at (804) 786-5560. See the appendix for the address of the Virginia Department of Minority Business Enterprise.

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is responsible for the nation's third largest state-maintained highway system. VDOT administers the building and maintenance of highways, bridges, ferries, and tunnel services throughout Virginia.

In 1982, Congress mandated that 10 percent of federal-aid highway money be spent with small businesses owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, thus directing the establishment of a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program. In 1999 the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) revised the DBE program removing the 10 percent mandate. The revised program allows federal-aid recipients to establish their own goal on federal-aid contracts. VDOT established its DBE goal at 10.1 percent, which was approved by USDOT. VDOT assists disadvantaged business enterprises (DBE), through its Business Assistance and Support programs, by offering services and support to increase their participation in contracts financed with federal funds. It also provides opportunities for DBE firms in state-funded highway projects. In addition, technical, educational and managerial training, and construction loan assistance are also available from VDOT. To participate in VDOT's DBE program, a firm must meet certain qualifying criteria through a certification process.

Contact: For more DBE program information, or to apply for certification, please contact VDOT at (804) 786-2085, or VDOT's Northern Virginia Office at (703) 934-0825. See the appendix for VDOT's addresses.

Virginia Regional Minority Supplier Development Council (VRMSDC)

The Virginia Regional Minority Supplier Development Council (VRMSDC) is a non-profit organization working to expand business opportunities for minority-owned businesses. In addition, the Council works to encourage mutually beneficial economic links between minority businesses and the public and private sectors.

Programs and services offered by VRMSDC include certification, referrals to corporate members of

qualified minority-owned suppliers, business assistance loan programs, networking events, and executive education scholarship programs.

Contact: For more information, please contact *VRMSDC* at (804) 780-2322, or *VRMSDC Northern Virginia Regional Office* at (703) 903-3431. See the appendix for VRMSDC's address.